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Secretion of the Gila Monster (*Heloderma suspectum*)," by J. Van Denburgh and O. B. Wight; "A Study of the Effects of Complete Removal of the Mammary Glands in Relationship to Lactose Formation," by B. Moore and W. H. Parker; and "Brief Contributions to Physiological Chemistry," communicated by L. B. Mendel.

BOTANY.

Briefer Courses in Botany.—In the making of text-books two more or less conflicting tendencies come to the surface—that to reasonable completeness and symmetry of treatment, and that to due brevity. Nearly every general text-book of the past decade or more, if it has met with favor, has appeared shortly in an abridged form. The latest of these abbreviated books are Atkinson's *Lessons*,¹ Barnes's *Outlines*,² and Coulter's *Plant Studies*;³ and each represents virtually a one-term text-book based on the earlier full-year books by the same authors. In the main, the characteristics of the latter pertain to them in their shorter form. Each author approaches his subject from his own point of view, and what has been said in earlier numbers of the *Naturalist* about the fuller books need not be repeated here for the abbreviated editions. A pamphlet of suggestions to teachers, by Dr. Caldwell, accompanies Part II of the fuller edition of Coulter, — *Plant Structures*, — and, while it is not above criticism, is likely to assist even the trained teacher in many small ways. T.

Nicholson's Dictionary of Gardening.⁴—Simultaneously with the appearance of Professor Bailey's *Cyclopedia of American Horticulture*, of which two volumes have already been noticed in the *Naturalist*, comes a supplement to its great predecessor, Nicholson's *Dictionary*, which a competent authority characterized in its day as the best reference book within reach of the gardener and fruit-grower, and a model

¹ Atkinson, G. F. *Lessons in Botany*. New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1900.

² Barnes, C. R. *Outlines of Plant Life, with Special Reference to Form and Function*. New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1900.

³ Coulter, J. M. *Plant Studies*. An Elementary Botany. New York, D. Appleton & Co., 1900.

⁴ Nicholson, G. The "1900" Supplement to the *Dictionary of Gardening*, a practical and scientific encyclopædia of horticulture for gardeners and botanists. Hyde Park, Mass., Geo. T. King, 1900. A to F. 4to, pp. viii + 376, ff., 385, with several colored plates. Price \$5.00.

of its kind. Nearly twenty years have elapsed, however, since the work was published, and progress has been both varied and rapid in gardening, so that it is a matter for congratulation that Mr. Nicholson, the well-known curator of the Kew Gardens, has found time to prepare a supplement bringing it up to date. This supplement is to consist of two volumes, of which the first, bearing a preface date of June, 1900, is already in hand. To say that the supplement equals, if it does not surpass, the original volumes is sufficient to indicate that in text and illustrations it is excellent. While for American gardeners Bailey's *Cyclopedia*, being an American work, is likely to be more directly useful, the fact that its scope is limited to this country makes the possession of the Nicholson *Supplement*, as well as the original *Dictionary*, all the more necessary for the larger establishments, which are constantly introducing the better of the plants grown abroad, and for all amateur libraries. T.

James's Practical Agriculture.¹—The author has embodied in this work the most elementary principles and practical applications of agricultural science in a very pleasing manner. It is especially well adapted as a text-book for beginners in the study of agriculture, and is certainly an impetus for the more general introduction of the subject in the public schools. Agriculture embraces such a broad field, it is impossible to treat elaborately each branch in a text-book of the ordinary size. While these first principles are concisely treated, they are nevertheless clear and accurate, and easily understood by persons not familiar with the study of botany, geology, or other sciences that have to do with agriculture.

The life cycle of a plant is traced from the seed to the mature plant, including both structure and essential conditions of germination and growth. The nature, origin, and improvement of the soil and its relation to the plant are discussed. One part is devoted to various field crops, taking up grasses, legumes, root crops, etc., giving the nature, habit, and treatment of each and the reasons therefor. Another part considers horticulture and its products, including the vegetable garden, orchard, and vineyard. The habits of many of the most common insects and fungous diseases of both field and garden are discussed. Live stock and its product, milk, receive some attention, as well as the history and characteristics of different breeds.

H. C. IRISH.

¹ James, Charles C. *Practical Agriculture*. American edition by John Craig. D. Appleton & Co., 1900.